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III. MUNICIPAL MARKETS IN CLEVELAND

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Market Master, Cleveland, Ohio.

There are three municipal markets in Cleveland. The Central Market is located in the downtown section and is readily accessible to twelve car lines. In connection with the market building there is a curbstome market, covering two and one-half miles of territory. Its tenants consist of 1,262 growers and producers and about 400 hucksters. The growers sell many products in a wholesale way, but also retail after 6 a.m. One street, near the various car lines, has been set aside for the meeting of retail producer and consumer. About 150 growers use this street. The New West Side Market, an exclusively retail market, and undoubtedly the finest municipal market building in this country, is located on the west side of the city. In this market there are 110 stalls and about 250 dealers selling from the curb outside the market. About 150 growers dispose of their goods at this market. A very modern storage plant is operated in the basement. The Broadway Market, also retail in its business, is an outlying market with 45 tenants.

As should be the case in all municipal markets, the stall rentals in the municipal markets of Cleveland are very low. High rents destroy the purpose for which markets are intended. The rents, varying as to location, range from \$15 to \$50 a quarter (three months), the \$50 stands being a few choice corner locations. The grower pays \$10 a year—an amount sufficient to cover the cost of cleaning. The curb huckster pays \$25 per year.

Until last year, the profits to the city from the operation of municipal markets amounted to \$20,000 annually. Due to the costs incident to operating the New West Side Market, earnings have been decreased to \$10,000 yearly.

There is a double inspection of weights and measures and also of foodstuffs. The city sealer inspects the weights and measures weekly. There is also a daily inspection by the force under the market master. The health board provides a meat and a sanitary inspector daily. A close watch on food products is also kept by the

force under the market master. Of particular mention is the type of scales used in the markets—a 15-inch double dial scale with large figures upon the dial. This scale must be hung so that one side of the dial faces the customer and the other side the dealer.

The markets of Cleveland are frequented by over 1,300 farmers and about 900 professional retailers. One great difficulty that has been experienced with direct selling by farmer to consumer has been the unwillingness of the farmer to spend the time at the market requisite for the disposal of his products. He is anxious to get back to the farm, and oftentimes forceful measures must be resorted to in order to make him retail his goods. The city can issue a license permitting him to wholesale but specifying also that he must retail. The position of Cleveland in this regard, however, is particularly fortunate. There is an immense farming vicinity round about the city, and the farmer is forced, therefore, to depend upon the retail trade for the disposal of the immense loads he takes to market.

The officials in connection with the markets are a market master, at a salary of \$1,800 per year, an assistant market master, at \$1,200 per year, and an inspector at \$900 per year. Within the last two years, these positions have been placed under civil service. Formerly the officials were appointed by the mayor for a term of two years. The market master and his assistant should have several years of actual market experience, making them conversant with general conditions and the tricks prevalent in the marketing trade.

Producers' prices are, of course, regulated by supply and demand. The farmers dispose of 95 per cent of their products in the markets. There has been a consequent lowering in the prices which consumers pay. In vegetables and fruits a saving of 100 per cent has been secured, and a conservative estimate would place the amount of saving at 50 per cent. The saving on meats and dairy products is approximately 15 per cent. It is evident that a well regulated market will have an effect not only upon the immediate radius of two or three miles round about, but upon the whole city as well.

The curb dealers make the sale of fruits their specialty and vast quantities are sold. There are over 200 meat dealers in the markets. One pork dealer in the Central Market sells two tons of pork every Saturday. Two cents per pound is the top margin of profit he makes on any sale and one and one-half cents per pound is his usual profit.

A proof of the attitude of farmers toward the municipal markets of Cleveland is found in the large number who bring their products to market.

As to constructive measures that should be taken to further the municipal market as an agency in direct distribution, the following may be mentioned: the municipal market should be in a location which is readily accessible to most of the car lines of the city. Low rentals should be charged. No telephone or delivery service should be allowed. Telephones are destructive of all principles for which markets are intended. A direct accompaniment of the telephone is the delivery service and oftentimes the credit system, and thus the fundamental principle for which the market was established—the saving of money to the public by minimizing all sources of expense in the way of costly service—is destroyed. The custom of giving trading stamps should be prohibited in the markets. Whatever donations are to be given should be given in prices to the people. The strongest kind of discipline should prevail in so far as honest dealing by the market dealers is concerned. The public should be able to come to a market with utmost confidence and make their purchases. It might be suggested, in this connection, that no leases be given to stall holders so that the official in charge might vacate the stall of any dealer who failed to deal honestly with the public. Good food inspection is also very essential to the success of a municipal market.